

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-05

NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2481

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

USMISSION NATO

CINCLANT

USCINCEUR

USLOSACLANT

USNMR SHAPE

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

S E C R E T PARIS 21824

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (USLOSACLANT PREVIOUSLY OMITTED)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NATO, MNUC, NPG, FR

SUBJECT: NPG - FRENCH ROLE IN NPG

REF: USNATO 4451

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1. WE READ WITH INTEREST USNATO'S PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS ON STRENGTHENING THE NPG. AS WASHINGTON ADDRESSES THIS SUBJECT, WE HOPE IT WILL KEEP IN MIND THE CONTINUOUS -- IF FRUSTRATING -- NEED TO FIND SOME WAY TO ASSOCIATE FRANCE WITH NATO'S CONSIDERATION AT SENIOR POLITICAL LEVEL OF ALLIANCE NUCLEAR STRATEGY. FRANCE'S GROWING STOCKPILE OF OPERATIONAL TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS MAKES THIS NEED ALL THE MORE PRESSING, WHILE FRANCE'S CURRENT NUCLEAR STRATEGY DOES NOT REDUCE OUR SENSE OF FRUSTRATION. IN ALL CANDOR, WE CANNOT REPORT ANY HINT OF FRENCH WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WORK OF THE NPG AT THE PRESENT TIME. THIS DOES NOT, HOWEVER, DIMINISH THE NEED TO FIND SOME WAY OF ESTABLISHING A PRAGMATIC LINK BETWEEN FRANCE AND THE NPG -- A LINK WHICH NEED NOT PROVIDE THE FRENCH WITH THE BENEFITS OF NPG MEMBERSHIP WITHOUT CHARGING THEM THE MEMBERSHIP FEE, BUT WHICH COULD STRIKE A MORE SATISFACTORY BALANCE ON THIS THORNY ISSUE THAN WE HAVE ACHIEVED IN THE PAST.

2. SPECIFICALLY, IT SEEMS TO US THAT US NATO'S PROPOSAL FOR REGIONAL SUB-GROUPS (REFTEL PARA 4) MIGHT PROVIDE OVER THE LONG TERM AN OPPORTUNITY TO ESTABLISH A WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FRANCE AND A CENTRAL REGION SUB-GROUP, PARTICULARLY GIVEN THE RATHER FLEXIBLE STRUCTURE THAT US NATO SEEMS TO HAVE IN MIND. WHILE IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PREDICT WITH ANY SENSE OF ASSURANCE TODAY WHETHER THE FRENCH -- AT ANY LEVEL, POLITICAL OR MILITARY -- WOULD BE ATTRACTED TO SOME SORT OF RELATIONSHIP WITH SUCH A REGIONAL SUB-GROUP, TIME AND CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES MAY PLAY TO OUR ADVANTAGE. CONSEQUENTLY, WE SUGGEST THAT WASHINGTON EXAMINE USNATO'S REGIONAL SUB-GROUPS INITIATIVE NOT ONLY FROM THE COGENT POINT OF VIEW SUGGESTED BY THE MISSION, BUT ALSO FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE POTENTIAL "BONUS" IT PROVIDES IN CREATING A POSSIBLE FRANCE-NPG POLITICAL LINK.

GAMMON

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